In A.F.Q. V.1 # 3 (sept) 1945

100

THE STORY OF THE BLOOD INDIANS.

By

Rev. Canon S. H. Middleton, C.E.D., C. St. J., F.R.E.S. B.Sc.

"Indian" is the name generally given to all the aborigines, or original people of both North and South America. It was first wrongly applied by the Spaniards at the time of the discovery of America, under the mistaken idea that they had landed in India.

The first historical record of the Blood Indians was given by Anthony Hendry when he met them on the western plains on October 14th, 1754. They were then camping with the north and south Blackfeet and the Peigans, which four tribes formed the original Blackfoot Confederacy. These political divisions of the Blackfoot Nation have been very definite for many centuries, and their origins have long had a place in Indian mythology. The genesis of these divisions must forever remain obscure, although there are many indications as to the order of their evolution. As this article is only an outline, the legends explaining each separate identity cannot be dealt with here.

In the remote past, according to their history, they were here held for many centuries in the Northland as captives, ingabiting the forests and muskegs of the Slave Lake and Peace River country. They were literally held in bondage, as the Egyptians held the Israelites. Their captors treated them as Slaves - from whence arose the names Greater and Lesser Slave Lakes. Many historians mention this fact.

Ultimately, however, the captives became so strong that they drove their captors south and east. Then commenced the famous

southern migration of the Confederacy, moving as one vast army from forty to fifty thousand strong. They came south, driving the Crows, the Shoshones, the Nez Perces and the Crees before them, and laid claim to that vast territory stretching from the Red Deer River in the north to the Yellowstone in the south; beyond the Saskatchewan in the east, and to the crest of the Rockies in the west. As proof of their valour, courage and native ability they successfully held all that enormous area against aggression by enemy tribes until it was subsequently taken from them by Treaty and peaceable negotiation.

In that long ago, when the Indians were the masters of this vast domain, they had time for leisure, reflection and meditation. They developed intellectually far beyond what we have been led to suppose. In physique they were, and still are, tall and finely proportioned. Their ethics,and code of morality were almost Spartanin their rectitude.

They were the highest type, physically, mentally and morally of any of the western tribes, and their courage was unquestioned. They were intensely religious. No people prayed more earnestly nor more frequently. In the domestic sphere they possessed the art of tanning deerskin to a delicate softness,which rendered it a luxurious and delightful raiment, and, like the Aztecs of the south, they manufactured head-dresses of feather and garments trimmed with porcupine work. They also had elaborated a system of picture writing. In short, the Bloods were the most intelligent and advanced of the western tribes, and had their civilization been permitted to proceed unhindered by white aggression,and the recurring inroads of their hereditary enemies, it would probably have developed into something resembling that of

the original people of Mexico, without, perhaps, exhibiting the sanguinary fanaticism of that people.

The Indian name representing the tribe is "Kai-nau", derived from "Ah-kai-hah" -"Many chiefs".

So far as history and tradition go the Bloods have long been roving buffalo hunters, dwelling in tepees and moving like nomads from place to place without permanent habitations. Their traditions go back to a time when they had no horses, and hunted their game on foot, but as early as Hendry's time, before 1754, they had already acquired many horses, taken from tribes to the southward, and later became noted for their great horse herds.

Unquestionably their widespread wanderings arose largely from the acquisition of the horse and, about the same time, of the gun. They were restless, aggressive, predatory - constantly at war with their neighbours; the Crees, Assinaboines, Sioux, Crows and Kutenias.

Their culture in latter days was that of the Plains tribes generally. The four main divisions seem to have been independent of each other, each having its own Sun Dance, Council and elective head-chief.

Each of the four tribes was subdivided into a number of bands, about forty in all. The gentile character of these bands is still retained. There is also a military and fraternal organization, known amongst them as the "All Comrades" and consists of at least twelve orders, or societies, membership being restricted more or less according to age.

They have innumerable dances: religious, war and social, besides secret societies for various purposes, together with many "sacred bundles" around each of which centres a complex ritual. The

chief order amongst them is the "Horn Society". Both sexes may be members of some societies. Their principal deities are the Sun, and a supernatural being known as "Napi" - Old man - who may be an incarnation of the same idea. The dead were usually deposited in trees, or were laid away in tepees erected on prominent hills.

Previous to the 17th century very little seems to have been heard of the Bloods. This is probably due to their absorption in the Blackfoot Confederacy, and the lack of reliable historians during those remote times. Definite records, however, appear from time to time, mention being made of them in 1754, 1774, 1786 and 1794. Walch speaks of them in 1805; Hendry in 1808; Franklin in 1824; Maximillian in 1843, and Hale in 1846. Morgan gives a translation of the name as "high minded people" in 1871.

In the olden times they were a stronger and hardier race, and few of them were ever sick. Most of those who died either met death in battle, or died of old age. We may well believe this was the case since the conditions of their life in those primitive times were such that the weakly were hardly likely to survive early childhood. Only the strongest children would grow up to become the parents of the next generation. Thus a process of selection was constantly going on, the effect of which was no doubt seen in the general health of the people.

With the advent of the whites came new conditions. Smallpox and other diseases were introduced and swept off large numbers of the people. In the year 1845 they were first decimated by the smallpox. This disease appears to have travelled up the Missouri River, and between 1840 and 1850 swept away hordes of Mandans, Sioux, Crows and other tribes camped along the great river. The disease spread

from tribe to tribe and finally reached the Bloods. In the winter of 1857-58 smallpox again carried off great numbers, though the mortality was not to be compared with that of the earlier visitation. In 1864 measles ravaged the camps, with fatal results; followed five years later by still another smallpox epidemic.

The early history of southern Alberta and the names of many of its geographical centres were closely associated with the Blood Indians.

The Mounted Police arrived in 1874, and on September 22nd, 1877, a Treaty was concluded between the Blackfoot Confederacy and the Canadian Government, which covered an area of 35,000 square miles. A subsequent and separate treaty was made with the Bloods which set aside the tract of land now known as the Blood Indian Reserve. It is situated on the south-west corner of Alberta.

This splendid tract of land, well watered, was assigned to the Blood Indians on July 2nd, 1883, when treaty was made and ratified between the Great White Mother (Queen Victoria) and the Bloods. Five hundred and forty one square miles in extent, it is the largest Indian reserve in the Dominion, with a present population of 1,664 Indians.

At the time of signing treaty the Bloods had no settled habitations. Their nomadic habits made it impossible to operate day schools successfully and led to the institution of boarding schools , which are now recognized by the Government as the most useful types of institutions for educating native children.

The administration of the reserve is carried on under the Department of Indian Affairs at Ottawa, and is represented by a resident Indian Agent, clerks, farm instructors, interpreters and native assistants. There is a Government hospital located on

the reserve, while education is consigned to both Anglican and Roman Catholic churches.

The Indian farms are divided into four groups, each under the supervision of a resident farm superintendent. There are approximately ten thousand acres under cultivation, while the Bloods also own large numbers of horses, the proverbial cayuse having almost disappeared from the reserve.

The Blood Indians have long been noted for their haughty demeanour, dignified bearing and independent spirit, and are regarded as being amongst the most progressive and intellectual Indians in Western Canada.

As a man the Blood Indian is not very different from his white brother. In his natural state he is kind and affectionate to his family, and is hospitable, honest and straightforward with his fellow tribesmen. He is intensely religious; no people pray more frequently or more earnestly. In the march of Progress Indian men and women are to-day attaining places of honour side by side with the Paleface. Let us hope that the ancient virtues of courage and endurance which have stood the Indian people in such good stead in the past will assist their descendents in the even more strenuous tasks of adapting themselves to the inroads of modern civilization.

2 copies for Supt issue Brush up volume too wordy. Pitt

~~AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF~~ THE STORY OF THE BLOOD INDIANS

By Rev. Canon S. H. Middleton, C.E.D., C. St. J., F.R.E.S., B.Sc.

"Indians" is the name generally given to all the aborigines or original people of both North and South America. It was first wrongly applied by the Spaniards at the time of the discovery of America, under the mistaken idea that they had landed in India.

The first historical record of the Blood Indians was given by Anthony Hendry when he met them on the Western Plains on October 14, in the year 1754. They were then camping with the Blackfeet, ~~(North and South),~~ North + South and the Peigans, which four tribes formed the original Blackfoot Confederacy. These political divisions of the Blackfoot Nation have been very definite for many centuries, and their origins have long had a place in Indian mythology. The genesis of these divisions must forever remain obscure although there are many indications as to the order of their evolution. As this article is only an outline, the legends explaining each separate identity cannot be ~~incorporated under this heading.~~ dealt with here.

In the remote past, according to their history, they were held for many centuries in the Northland as captives inhabiting the forests and muskegs of the Slave Lakes and Peace River country. They were literally held in bondage, as the Egyptians held the Israelites. Their captors treated them as slaves -- from whence arose the names ~~of Greater~~ Great and Lesser Slave Lakes. Many historians mention this fact.

Ultimately, however, the captives became so strong that they drove their captors south and east. Then commenced the famous southern migration of the Confederacy, moving as one vast army from forty to fifty thousand strong. They came south, driving the Crows, the Shoshones, the Nez Perces and the Crees before them and laid claim to that vast territory stretching from the Red Deer river in the North, to the Yellowstone on the south, beyond the Saskatchewan in the east, and to the crest of the Rockies in the west. As a proof of their valour, courage, and native ability, they successfully held all that enormous area against aggression by enemy tribes, until it was subsequently taken from them by Treaty and peaceable negotiation.

In that long ago, when the Indians were the masters of this vast domain, they had time for leisure, reflection and meditation. They developed intellectually far beyond what we have been led to suppose. In physique they were (+still are) tall and finely proportioned. Their ~~system of~~ ethics and code of morality was almost Spartan in its rectitude. They were the highest type, physically, mentally and morally of any of the western tribes, and their courage was unquestioned. ~~Such has gained a notoriety which has rendered them the heroes of many a romantic novel.~~ They were intensely religious. No people prayed more earnestly, nor more frequently. In the domestic sphere, they possessed the art of tanning deerskin to a delicate softness, which rendered it a luxurious and delightful raiment, and like the Aztecs of the south they manufactured head-dresses of feather and garments trimmed with porcupine work. They also had elaborated a

system of picture-writing. In short, the Bloods were the most intelligent and advanced of the western tribes, and had their civilization been permitted to proceed unhindered by white aggression, and the recurring infoads of their hereditary enemies, it would probably have developed into something resembling that of the original people of Mexico, without, perhaps exhibiting the sanguinary fanaticism of that people.

The Indian name representing the tribe is "Kai-nau", derived from "Ah-kai-hah", "many chiefs" ~~from "a-kai-im", many "ni-nau" chief.~~

So far as history and #tradition go, the Bloods have long been roving buffalo hunters, dwelling in teepees and moving ~~periodically~~ like nomads from place to place, without permanent habitations. Their traditions go back to a time when they had no horses, and hunted their game on foot, but as early as Hendry's time, before 1754, they already had had acquired many horses, taken from tribes ~~farther to the south~~ to the southward, and later they became noted for their great horse herds. ~~It is entirely probable that their wandering over the plains was due largely to the acquisition~~ unquestionably their widespread wanderings arose largely from the acquisition of the horse, and, about the same time, of the gun. They were restless, aggressive, predatory and constantly at war with their neighbors, the Cree, Assiniboine, Sioux, Crow and Kutania.

Their culture in ~~the early~~ later days, was that of the Plains Tribes ~~generally, although there is evidence of an earlier culture.~~ The four main divisions seem to have been independent of each other, each having its own Sundance, Council, and elective head-chief. Each of the four tribes was subdivided into a number of bands, about forty in all. The gentile character of these bands is still retained.

There is also a military and fraternal organizaaion, known amongst them as the "All Comrades" and consista of at least twelve orders or societies, membership ~~is~~ being restricted more or less according to age. They have ~~a great number of~~ innumerable dances -- religious, war, and social, besides secret societies for various purposes, together with many "Sacred bundles" around each of which centres a complex ritual. The chief order amongst them ~~being~~ is the "Horn Society". Both sexes may be members of some societies, Their principal deities are the Sun, and a super-natural being known as "Napi", old man, who may be an incarnation of the same idea. The dead were usually deposited in trees or ~~some-times~~ were laid away in teepees erected ~~for the purpose~~ on prominent hills.

Previous to the 17th century, very little seems to have been heard of the Bloods. This is probably due to their absorption in the Blackfoot Confederacy, and the lack of reliable historians during those remote times. Definite records, however appear from time to time, mention being made of them in 1754, 1774, 1786, and 1794. Walch speaks of them in 1805, Hendry in 1808, Franklin in 1824, Maximillian in 1843 and Hale in 1846. Morgan gives a translation of the name as "high minded people" in 1871. In the olden times they were a strong and hardy ~~people~~ race, and few of them were ever sick. Most of ~~them~~ those who died, ~~were killed in Battle~~, either met death in battle, or died of old age. We may well believe that this was the case, ~~because~~ since the conditions of their life in those primitive times were such that the weakly ~~and~~ those predisposed to any constitutional trouble would not survive were hardly likely to dance early childhood. Only the strongest children would grow up to become the parents of the next generation. Thus a process of selection was constantly going on, the effect of which was no doubt seen in the general health of the peo;le. With the advent of the Whites,

came new conditions. Various special diseases were introduced and swept off large numbers of the people. An important agent in their destruction was alsohol. In the year 1845 they were decimated by the small-pox. This disease appears to have travelled up the Missouri River; and in the early years, between 1840 and 1850, it swept away hosts of Mandans, Sioux, Crows, and other tribes camped along the great river. The disease spread from tribe to tribe, and finally reached the Bloods. It is said by Whites who were in the country at the time, that this small-pox almost the Plains bare of Indians. In the winter of 1857 - 58 small-pox again carried off great numbers, but the mortality was not to be compared with that of 1845. In 1864, measles ran through the camps, and was very fatal, and again in 1869 they had the small-pox. Between the years 1860 and 1875 a great deal of whisky was traded amongst them, Miss Agnes E. Laut, when writing of this period says " the country at the foothills was inhabited by the Confederacy of the Bloods, Peigans and Blackfeet -- tigers of the prairie when sober, and worse than tigers when drunk." In the fall of 1870 "Stand-Off" was established, after that Whoop-up and Fort Kipp were built,

Thus the early history of Southern Alberta and the names of some of its geographical centres were closely associated with the development of the Blood Indians. These and other points covering the Indian nomenclature owe their recognition to the original camping grounds of the Indians, which were in turn visited by the early traders. From the peculiar circumstances of these locations, each name possesses its own significance. The Belly and Bow rivers also received their names from the Bloods "in the long ago."

The mounted police arrived in 1874 and on September 22nd 1877 a Treaty was concluded between the Blackfoot Confederacy and the Canadian Government, which covered an area of 35,000 square miles. A subsequent and separate Treaty was made with the Bloods which set aside the tract of land now known as the Blood Indian Reserve. It is situated on the south-west corner of Alberta. Its natural boundaries are the St. Mary's River on the east and the Belly River on the west. Adjacent to the north-east end of the Reserve, is the city of Lethbridge, to the north-west is situated the historic town of Macleod and at the south-west we find Cardston, the mecca of Mormanism where stands the Mormon Temple. To the west loom the majestic Rocky Mountains glistening in the sunlight with their snow-capped summits, while to the east, rising like a gaunt spectre on the horizon stand the Sweet Grass hills long famous in the early history of Alberta.

This splendid tract of land, well watered, closely nestling under the foot hills of the Rockies was assigned to the Blood Indians on July the 2nd, 1883, when the Treaty was made and ratified between the "Great White Queen" and the famous Bloods. It is the largest Indian Reserve in the Dominion of Canada (541 Sq. Miles.) covering a territory half the lize of Holland and has a population of 1370 Indians. During the past few years the number has been steadily increasing. (In 1945 - there are 1664 Bloods) amounted to

The gratuities and annuities assigned ~~were to pay~~ $12.00 per head, and an annuity of $5.00 per head, each Chief to receive $25.00 per annum and each subordinate officer $15.00 per year.

At the time of signing Treaty they had no settled habitations. Their nomadic habits made a successful carrying on of day schools impossible and this led to the institution of Boarding, of residential schools which are now recognized by the Government and

the Churches as the most useful type of institution for educating the children of this part of the country.

Within less than 50 years, however, progressive changes have taken place that even the most sanguine of the Old Timers in the early days would not have dared to prophecy.

The administration of the Reserve is carried on under the auspices of the Indian Department, at Ottawa, which in turn is represented by a resident Indian Agent, Clerks, Stockman, Farm Instructors Interpreter and Indian Assistants. There is a Government Hospital located on the Reserve. The education is consigned to the care of both Anglican and Roman Churches. There are two residential schools on the Reserve, one under each denomination. Each institution is under the charge of an ordained Clergyman who is assisted by a capable staff of teachers. The clergyman in each case is responsible for the religious instruction imparted, both to the Indian children and adults. The education received at these institutions is beneficial to the Indians, as the graduates develop good ideas of citizenship and in many cases are converted into capable farmers.

The Indian farms are divided into four groups, each district or "Farm" being under the supervision of a resident Farm Superintendent. There are approximately 10,000 acres under cultivation. The Bloods own a large herd of stock, their horses being more or less of standard breed; and the proverbial "cayuse" having almost disappeared from the Reserve. The Blood Indians as a band have distinctly tribal characteristics, and are noted for their haughty demeanour, dignified bearing and independent spirit. They are regarded as the most progressive and intellectual Indians in Western Canada.

The Blood Indian as a man is not very different from his white Brother, except that he is undeveloped. In his natural state he is kind and affectionate to his family, is hospitable, honest and straightforward with his fellows. He is intensely religious; no people pray more earnestly, or more frequently. He is neither a monster of inhumanity nor a marvel of cunning, but a being with like feelings and aspirations to our own. Because his customs and habits of thought differ from ours he has been charged with all manner of crimes and offences ~~with which he has, in general, nothing to do~~ for which he has in no way been responsible. In the march of progress, Indian men and women are to-day taking places of honour and emolument side by side with their white fellow citizens. Let us hope that the ancient virtues of courage and endurance which have stood the Indian people in such good stead ~~of~~ in the past old, will assist their descendants in the even more strenuous tasks adapting themselves to the inroads of civilizations ~~to which they are now called~~. Civilized and educated the Indian ~~of the better class~~ is not less intelligent than the average white man, and he has every capacity for becoming ~~a good~~ an excellent citizen.